

of it had been pulled down, and even now the improvement is not finished.

No one, that has not lived in the neighbourhood of some of their operations, can fully appreciate the great injury which is done to the inhabitants of the localities by their enormous delays, and the public purse also suffers materially from the same cause, as the ground generally remains unlet till the opening, or whatever it may be, is finished, as witness Victoria-street, the site of the Fleet Prison, and vacant ground in several parts of the city, the rent of which is completely wasted.

On this ground, at least, the public have a right to demand an alteration; and that alteration, to be effectual, must strike at the roots of the weeds, or they will again spring up; for if the "Improvement Committee" is merely reformed, the greatest evil will still be left untouched,—that of several irresponsible bodies attempting to do that which can only be done properly by one directing body. Victoria-street forms a striking instance of the badness of this mode of acting. Merely because part of the new street passes through the "city," and part lies without the "city," it appears it was necessary to have two separate bodies to carry it out; and the consequence is, that it lingers as we see it, and the effect of this is, as I stated before, that the ground does not let, and the expense is increased to a prodigious extent. As regards the injury to the neighbourhood, any one living in the locality through which the street passes can fully bear me out on that point. However, to enter into the details of the proposed general scheme.

With respect to Smithfield-market, I think there is now very little doubt, that before many years that monster nuisance will be removed to a more convenient locality; and the questions will arise, what is to become of the hay and straw market? and what is to become of the site? With regard to the former, I propose that it should be removed from its present position to some other locality, to be provided for the purpose in the neighbourhood. Perhaps the site of the Fleet Prison, which has so long lain idle, might be turned to account for this purpose. I think if it were somewhat enlarged, it might be easily adapted for this end, and as it lies between the two great thoroughfares of Holborn and Fleet-street, and would be entered from a wide street with very little traffic (Farringdon-street), I do not think it would be objectionable, unless the proposed new street from Cheapside to Long Acre would require the situation. I should here remark, that this is merely thrown out as a suggestion, and if not practicable, I think another site in the neighbourhood of Victoria-street (late new Farringdon-street), Clerkenwell, might be provided. Then comes the second question, what is to become of the site of the market? I think that this is so fitted, for many reasons (which I will presently shew), for a railway station, that it ought not to be applied to any other purpose.

In the first place (when the market is removed), it will be the only vacant space of any considerable extent in the middle of London suited for that purpose. It is also convenient for the traffic, which would, of course, be brought by the railways, as it does not lie in any of the principal thoroughfares, and is convenient for them all, having streets branching off in every direction; and the Surrey side of the river could easily be gained by vehicles through Victoria-street, Farringdon-street, and Bridge-street, over Blackfriars-bridge. It could also be easily extended (as regards expense, which is now the only criterion on such matters), and the enlargement for the station would abolish the horrible slaughter-houses and yards which abound in the neighbourhood. The formation of a central terminus here would, also, tend to compensate the inhabitants of the vicinity for the loss of business consequent upon the removal of the market, and upon which ground they would otherwise strenuously oppose such a step. To return to the "commission" again, of course it would be requisite for them to have sufficient control over the gas, water, and electric telegraph companies, and the Sewer and Paving Commissioners, &c., to make all their operations harmonize, so as to form one beautiful whole. The commission, too, should include the formation of parks in their scheme as a very essential portion of it, for I consider what has been done under this head as yet, as

merely a small instalment of what is due to the public of this large city. Hitherto (with the exception of Victoria-park at Hackney, and the park now in course of formation at Battersea), the higher classes have had the greatest share of these necessities in their neighbourhood, the "West-end;" thus there are St. James's, the Green-park, Hyde-park, Kensington-gardens, and the Regent's-park, all in that locality, while, as I said before, there are only two in course of formation in other parts of London. Greenwich, of course, cannot be called London at present. I think a great deal of good might be done by obtaining narrow strips of ground by the side of the river and planting and laying them out, somewhat in the same manner as the Temple-gardens (which, by the bye, I could wish were always open to the public). There are many vacant plots of land, particularly in the neighbourhood of Rotherhithe, which, if properly embanked and laid out, might be turned to very good account in this way.

While on the subject of parks, I would observe that, I believe it is intended to impose a toll on the bridge about to be built from Battersea-park to Chelsea. Surely this might be dispensed with; and as it is to be built with the public money, the public ought not to be obliged to pay for it again, particularly as it is to be formed for the express purpose of affording access to a public park, and the use of which will be virtually denied to many of the poorer inhabitants of that vicinity, if a toll is to be levied on the bridge.

In the laying out of new streets, care should be taken to provide ample space for cab and omnibus stands, the want of which in some parts of London is very great. Some of the principal of the new thoroughfares, which of course it would be necessary to make of considerable width, might be divided in the middle by a double row of posts, about eight or ten feet apart, with foot-paving between them, so as to afford facilities for crossing. Here and there it would be necessary to leave openings for the carriages to cross from one side of the road to the other; and I think it would be found to work well if one division of the street were appropriated exclusively to the carriages going in one direction, and vice versa, so that there would be two distinct currents, neither of which would interfere with each other.

Another suggestion that I have to make is, that the footways of some of the chief of the new thoroughfares should be roofed in with a covering of glass, supported either by light metal columns, which would also serve as lamp-posts, or by metal brackets projecting from the fronts of the houses. The great reduction in the price of glass would enable this plan to be carried out at a comparatively small cost, and it would not present the objection which there is against the Regent's Quadrant, of darkening the ground and basement floors of the houses.

A LONDONER.

THE CEMETERIES' CLAUSES BILL.

THE bill which has been brought into the House by Sir W. Somerville and Sir George Grey, for consolidating in one Act certain provisions usually contained in Acts authorizing the making of cemeteries, is not sufficiently stringent in respect of the mode of burial.

Section 50 provides that, "No body shall be buried in any vault under any of the chapels of the cemetery, or within (a certain number of) feet of the outer wall of any such chapel." And 51, "No body shall be buried in any grave, not being a vault or catacomb, at a less depth than thirty inches from the ordinary surface of the ground to the upper side of the coffin; and if the sexton or other person having charge of the preparation of the grave allow any body to be buried in such grave, or if the undertakers allow any body to be buried in any grave at a less depth than thirty inches from the ordinary surface of the ground to the upper side of the coffin, every such sexton or other person and the undertakers shall for every such offence be liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds."

A clause should be inserted to prevent the interment of more than a certain number of bodies in a given area, or presently we shall find the same atrocities perpetrated that have

disgraced some of our metropolitan churchyards.

Section 58 provides a penalty on every person who shall wilfully destroy or injure any building belonging to the cemetery, or injure or deface any monument, tablet, or gravestone within it.

Relative to the prevention of interment in towns, Lord Morpeth said in the House the other night, that he entertained no hope of being able to pass any bill to this effect in the present session, but a very confident one of doing so in the next. There was loud laughter in the House, and well there might be.

THE ARTS OF THE MIDDLE AGES.*

THE treatise by Theophilus, priest and monk. *De Diversis Artibus, seu Diversarum Artium Schedula;* is well known to those learned in ancient art. Didron, the Abbé Texier and others, ascribe it to the twelfth or thirteenth century, while Leasing and Emeric David place it in the tenth. The present translator, Mr. Hendrie, places it between the two, and gives some sufficiently good arguments in support of his opinion. It belongs, unquestionably, as Guichard remarks, to a period of transition,—"*de renouvellement et de renaissance*;" but who this artist-monk was, and at what precise time he lived, cannot be determined with certainty.

In the early part of the eleventh century, a new impulse was given to the arts; churches were raised and decorated with sumptuous shrines and costly gates in metal. In England, France, and Italy, a great number of manuscripts, ornamented with miniatures, and otherwise illuminated, were executed. The ornaments for the Roman altars, desks of gilt bronze, and objects which ornamented the choir, much favoured the art of casting metals, modelling, enamelling, niello, damascene-work, and often produced works of surpassing execution. And it is to this period that, according to our author, the work of Theophilus upon "*The Divers Arts*" is to be ascribed.

It consists of three books, each divided into a number of short chapters in the shape of recipes, and contains a large amount of curious information on colours, gilding, works in glass and metal, casting, &c.

Amongst the chapters are many relating to stained glass, concerning which the translator speaks in his notes as follows:—

"There are many processes here described which will repay the trouble of perusal to the most scientific of our artists; these, however, are not of the class which would turn from any inquiry upon the subject during the present state of conflicting opinions, when the very principles of the art which formerly led to its perfection are questioned or neglected."

The principles laid down by Theophilus must be studied by the glass-painter, and again placed as the foundation of his labours; modern chemistry has doubtless supplied him with means, in many instances far beyond what his predecessors have enjoyed, in the pursuit of this art; but there are yet conditions to be fulfilled which principally depend upon himself. The glass-painter should well weigh the propriety of striving to rival the grey demitints of the old painters, or aiming at the production of effects to which the nature of his art is in opposition.

It was from careful consideration and long experience that the art of glass-painting became digested into the excellence of the 15th and 16th centuries; impotency, assuredly, had no share in principles followed. That the apparent simplicity of the methods of the Byzantine and Gothic glass-painters, the powerful and harmonious effects resulting from a skilful arrangement and breadth of colour, to which Theophilus directs the attention of the artist, although allied to meagre invention, poor drawing, and incomplete execution, carried them triumphantly through their ordeal, the remains of the works executed under the influence of this school attest. When upon this foundation were superadded the pure and vigorous outline, and simple, elegant conception of the early Italian artists, the art appears to have reached a climax which it must have

* "*De Diversis Artibus*," by Theophilus, formerly an Encyclopedia of Curious Arts of the Middle Ages. Translated with Notes, by Robert Hendrie, London, 1867. John Murray.

† In ascribing these remarks, the writer has only to turn the ground of their destination, for they would not apply, as there are very few traces of ancient glass.